



JUN 1 1995

Indian Health Service
Rockville MD 20857

SGM 95-4

TO : Indian Health Service Employees

FROM: Director

SUBJECT: Workplace Violence


I am fully committed to ensuring that the work environment for all Indian Health Service (IHS) employees is healthy, safe, and secure from acts or threats of violence. To accomplish this I am establishing a zero tolerance policy on Workplace Violence (WPV) that applies equally to the behavior of all employees, contractors and others with whom we work.

Our work environment must be free from all forms of violence and acts of intimidation, including harassment, threats, altercations, or assault. You are reminded that such conduct by IHS employees will not be tolerated and known incidents should be reported immediately to management officials. I expect all employees to act in a manner that is respectful and courteous to the public, as well as to fellow employees.

The IHS is not a high-risk environment for WPV, but this Agency is not immune. **Many** of us work in environments where the risks for violence may be higher than in the traditional office setting. I have taken this position to heighten awareness and to assist in the prevention of violent incidents at all MS facilities. To enforce this policy through Agency management officials, staff who commit or threaten violent acts or acts of intimidation in the workplace will be subject to governing policies and procedures for addressing employee misconduct. In addition, if warranted, misconduct will be referred to local police and legal authorities for possible action.

Agency collective bargaining officials (CBO) must provide a copy of this memorandum to unions and meet existing bargaining unit obligations before implementing WPV policy. I encourage CBOs to meet with existing bargaining unit representatives to develop a strong labor-management partnership to prevent WPV.

I urge you to join me and your co-workers in actively creating and supporting a work environment that is safe, supportive, and free from WPV. These are difficult and stressful times for many of us, so awareness and early intervention are critical steps in the prevention process. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact your local human resources staff.



Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Surgeon General



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

4-8
Public Health Service

JUN 12 1995

Memorandum

- From Assistant Secretary for Health

Subject Violence in the Workplace

To PHS Agency Heads
Acting Surgeon General
Deputy Assistant Secretaries for Health
PHS Agency Executive Officers
PHS Staff Office Directors
PHS Regional Health Administrators

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The news media remind us almost daily that we live in an environment that is becoming increasingly more violent. Many of our employees have been exposed to violence or threats of violence in their daily lives, and a significant number are concerned about the potential for violence in the workplace. For these reasons, I believe it is important to set forth PHS policy on this subject.

Employees shall be protected as fully as possible from assaults, threats, intimidation, and harassment while at the work site. Thus, it is essential that we make clear to all PHS employees that violence, threats of violence, intimidating and otherwise similar disruptive behavior are unacceptable conduct that will not be tolerated. This policy also applies to contractors who are not employees but who work in PHS facilities.

In order to minimize the potential for violence in the workplace and to ensure that prompt corrective action can be taken when it does occur, anyone working in PHS facilities, who witnesses or becomes aware of threats or acts of violence from any source must immediately report what he/she has observed or learned to appropriate agency officials, as set forth below, and/or law enforcement authorities. Employees are also expected to cooperate fully in any subsequent investigations. We do not want employees to place themselves at unnecessary personal risk in dangerous situations; however, we expect them to make immediate contact with an agency official who can respond appropriately, such as a supervisor, security officer, EEO or human resource officials.


In turn, officials receiving these reports are required to immediately and appropriately act upon them.

If anyone observes a violent act or a threat posing imminent danger, his/her immediate response should be to call 911. Immediately thereafter, he/she should inform his/her supervisor and the appropriate security office.

Please distribute the attached policy statement to all employees in your organization and ensure, that the issue of workplace violence and this policy are discussed in staff meetings so that any questions or concerns about implementation of the policy can be promptly addressed. The implementation of a comprehensive . PHS Workplace Violence Prevention Program is a priority for me, and all employees, supervisors and managers are expected to support this initiative on a continuing basis. A PHS task force, comprised of representatives of a variety of disciplines from all PHS agencies, has been convened for this purpose. The task force will develop a plan of action to address this critical issue in detail.

Our intention is to make the workplace safe where dignity, respect, and fairness are basic human rights. PHS employees, who commit or threaten to commit violent acts or acts of intimidation against anyone in the workplace, will be disciplined in accordance with governing policies and procedures for addressing employee misconduct and/or referred for action as appropriate under local and state law.

Collective Bargaining Officials should provide a copy of the PHS policy statement and this memorandum to recognized unions. Any obligation to negotiate must be satisfied before distributing or implementing the policy within existing bargaining units.

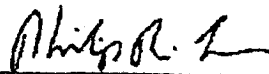

Philip R. Lee, M.D.

Attachment

U.S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
POLICY STATEMENT ON VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Threatening, intimidating, violent or similar disruptive behavior in the workplace is unacceptable conduct. It is the policy of the Public Health Service (PHS) that there will be zero tolerance for such acts. PHS will take appropriate action necessary to ensure that every employee has a work environment: free from threatening behavior and violence.

Date JUN 12 1995


Philip R. Lee, M.D.
Assistant Secretary for Health